EPI Update for Friday, July 18, 2014 Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology (CADE) lowa Department of Public Health (IDPH)

Items for this week's EPI Update include:

- Dengue Fever and Chikungunya
- Proper specimen submission for animal rabies samples
- RAGBRAI riders reminded to stay hydrated
- Meeting announcements and training opportunities

Dengue Fever and Chikungunya

Dengue Fever and Chikungunya are illnesses transmitted primarily by *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes. The most common symptoms of both illnesses are acute onset of fever and joint pain. Currently, there is no vaccine for either illness and overseas travelers who go to areas where these illnesses are endemic are at risk of becoming ill. Health care providers are encouraged to consider both Dengue Fever and Chikungunya testing in patients with symptoms consistent with these illnesses and a with travel history to endemic areas (such as the Caribbean). Nebraska announced its forth imported case of Chikungunya today, in a resident who recently returned from Puerto Rico. Also today, Florida announced its first cases of locally acquired Chikungunya, one in Miami Dade County and the other in Palm Beach County.

For more information about Dengue Fever and Chikungunya, and where they are endemic, visit www.cdc.gov/dengue/ and www.cdc.gov/chikungunya/.

Proper specimen submission for animal rabies samples

In recent weeks, IDPH has been asked about the proper ways to submit animal rabies specimens. Inadequate storage and/or timely transportation may cause the specimen to be untestable, resulting in the need to receive rabies shots – perhaps unnecessarily. Thus, it is important to properly handle and store specimens and animals that need to be tested.

How to send an animal for rabies testing:

- If the specimen will not be submitted for testing immediately, it should be refrigerated until right before transportation or shipment.
- DO NOT FREEZE THE SPECIMEN!
- Double bag the specimen and place in a hard-sided container, such as a Styrofoam cooler.
- During transport, place ice packs around the bagged specimen to keep it cool.
- It is important to note that the specimen containers will NOT be returned to the owner and those submitting specimens should plan accordingly.

For complete instructions on submitting a specimen for rabies testing, visit SHL's web site at www.shl.uiowa.edu/kitsquotesforms/rabiescollectioninstructions.pdf.

RAGBRAI riders reminded to stay hydrated

Last year IDPH conducted a study on hydration during RAGBRAI. The study found that while most riders understood the importance of drinking plenty of water, they also underestimated the amount of water they should drink and the distance between water stops could be lengthy. On some legs of RAGBRAI last year, the average distance between readily available water was almost 7 miles - a ride of nearly an hour for slower bicyclists. Since you never know how long it

will be from one water stand to the next, you should carry plenty of water with you at all times. Other important hydration tips include:

- Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink water. If you feel thirsty, you are already low on fluids.
- Riders should drink at least 16 ounces of cool fluid, like water or sports drinks, an hour will to help stay hydrated; however, when you are sweating you may need more.
- Salt and minerals lost through sweating can be replaced with re-hydration fluids designed for athletes. Salt can also be replaced with foods like salted crackers and minerals like potassium can be replaced by eating fruits, especially bananas.

Meeting announcements and training opportunitiesNone

We wish everyone a happy and healthy week! Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology Iowa Department of Public Health 800-362-2736